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27 March 1952

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, [REDACTED]
SUBJECT : Emergency Leave

1. This Branch requests a ruling from the Division on the question of emergency leave for staff people in the field and the conditions under which it can be granted. There seems to be some confusion on this point in the field and at headquarters and I am requesting this ruling, not only to clarify the question, but to protect the employees themselves.

2. The regulations as we read them in this Branch are not clear on whether emergency leave, whether an employee is working for a proprietary corporation or for an [REDACTED] station, can be taken at government expense or not. The implication is that it cannot be so taken and that when a person arrives at an overseas station he comes home when a family or personal emergency occurs at his own expense. Clearly, travel orders can be issued to a person when a personal emergency occurs bringing him back to the United States ostensibly for debriefing or training. In the case of lower level employees, however, this would be hard to justify on any reasonable basis. There is also the consideration that the operating Branches are not really equipped to decide whether a personal situation is an emergency or not and to determine that travel expenses home will be paid in some cases but not in others.

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3. The reason I am raising this question is that I am finding that the Agency tends to interpret travel and other standard government regulations from the standpoint of the way they are written rather than from the standpoint of what we consider fair treatment of the employee and we are doing the employee no service if we pay his fare back to the United States in a case where it cannot be officially justified and this results in a claim being levied on him subsequently for this expense. I am acutely aware of this situation right now as [REDACTED] has recently been asked to collect some \$600 from an employee, about \$300 of which was expended in the interest of operational necessity but for which sum payment is being requested of the employee because it violated a standard government regulation.

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4. I feel

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4. I feel that to protect our people from future claims, we should be given a ruling on this question at the earliest possible moment.

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